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INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 9676
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 9454
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 4304
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 0902
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 6632
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 5507
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
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SUBJECT: DCM MEETING WITH FORMER PAKISTAN AMBASSADOR TO
AFGHANISTAN

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson for reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

11. (C) Summary. During a January 12 meeting with DCM, Rustam Shah Mohman, former Pakistan Ambassador to Afghanistan and former Chief Secretary for the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), expressed his long-held view that most of Pakistan's problems in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) were due to the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. He blamed former President Musharraf for introducing the Pakistan Army into FATA without prior consultations with the people and for creating a gulf between the people of FATA and the rest of Pakistan. DCM agreed with Rustam's view that developmental and legal change must be introduced gradually in FATA but disagreed that the current problems in FATA could be laid at our door. Rustam's major interest, however, was to seek clarification about USG policy towards negotiations with the Taliban: DCM explained that the USG supports the Afghan government's efforts to seek reconciliation with those Taliban elements who are willing to lay down their arms and recognize the Afghan government. End Summary.

12. (C) On January 12, the DCM, along with PolCouns and NAS Senior Advisor, met with Rustam Shah Mohman, the former Pakistan Ambassador to Afghanistan, former Chief Secretary for the NWFP, and former federal Interior Secretary, to discuss Pakistan and USG strategies in the NWFP and FATA. Rustam, who is currently a consultant for the Pakistan-Afghanistan peace jirga and resides in Peshawar, repeated his long-held belief that the FATA and NWFP never experienced problems with militants until the "U.S. War in Afghanistan."

13. (C) Rustam argued that the deteriorating situation in the FATA and NWFP can be traced back to two "big blunders" by former President Pervez Musharraf. First, Musharraf did not explain his policies on the FATA to the people, creating a great disconnect between the FATA and the rest of the country. Second, Musharraf, at the pressure of the USG, sent the Pakistan Army into the region without any prior consultation with the tribes of the FATA. Thus, the tribes felt isolated from the rest of the country and then "invaded" as the Army began to man posts within their areas.

14. (C) In Rustam's opinion, the way to solve the growing militancy issue in Pakistan is to solve the problems in Afghanistan. Then, in consultation with the tribes and with the respect of the traditions of the FATA, development and legal changes should be implemented gradually in an "evolutionary, not revolutionary" manner.

15. (C) The DCM agreed that change needed to be evolutionary but took exception to the idea that the militancy in FATA was the result of U.S. actions in Afghanistan. He outlined the USG strategy, which had begun in 2006, to concurrently increase development required to improve dismal socio-economic conditions in FATA and to build up the capability of Pakistani security and law enforcement agencies to combat militancy. This included recent efforts to assist people displaced by military action and to provide jobs through USAID's "Livelihoods".

16. (C) Additionally, he explained that the USG is working with the GOP on bettering the health care and education systems, along with trying to strengthen the economy of the FATA and NWFP through the Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZs). Another objective of the Mission is to continue to encourage the GOP for political reforms in the FATA - which include changes to the Frontier Crimes Regulation and the extension of the Political Parties Act into the tribal areas - to assist in fully bringing the area into the country.

17. (C) Getting to what appeared to be his major reasons for seeking a meeting, Rustam asked if the USG had plans to bring those taliban who lay down their arms into the government structure. The DCM assured him that the Mission had made it clear that we supported the Afghan government's efforts to reach out to those taliban elements who were willing to lay down their arms and recognize the government. So far, however, we had not seen a positive response from Mullah Omar and his Taliban associates.

PATTERSON